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LCA Tools for Decision Support: Chainet

European Network on Chain Analysis for Environmental Decision Support

What is CHAINET?

CHAINET is a EU-supported Concerted Action in the Environment and Climate Programme. Similar to its predecessor LCANET, it is a European network which seeks broad participation. CHAINET addresses the use of a variety of environmental tools. The Concerted Action commenced in December 1997 and will run for two years.

Aims

The aims of CHAINET can be condensed to:

- linking the different scientific tool communities, problem owners and stakeholders,
- establishing a toolbox for chain analysis, linking demand for environmental information with supply of relevant information,
- investigating how tools can be applied in three selected cases to suggest specific directions for design and development.

Organisation

CHAINET has a Board with members from eight different European institutes. The Board has the final responsibility with respect to all activities. From CML Prof. Helias A. Udo de Haes is chairman of the Board and Nicoline Wisberg is the coordinator. Some of the Board members are responsible for organising a workshop or a meeting, while the overall coordination of CHAINET's activities is the responsibility of CML. Working groups will be set up for each of the three cases. These working groups are open for all interested.

Work-Programme

The toolbox

The supply of tools providing environmental information for decision support is large and diverse. In a problem-oriented approach, distinct demands for environmental information according to the different decision contexts will be the starting point. These demands will be linked to relevant tools or combination of tools. A so-called toolbox will be established consisting of guidelines linking demands for environmental information with supply of environmental information (tools).

The cases

Three cases have been selected as useful vehicles for discussions on how tools can be applied in order to obtain information on net environmental improvements. The three cases are the supply, use and waste management chain for

- automobiles,
- consumer electronic goods,
- domestic clothes washing.

The working groups, one for each case, will

- identify environmental problems in the chain,
- describe the state-of-the-art results from existing environmental analyses,
- discuss relevant tools for the analysis of environmental impact,
- formulate guidelines for the application of tools.

What will be the main results?

- A guidebook for analytical tools for decision support in design and comparison,
- a network of environmental problem owners and experts on environmental tools.

CHAINET Activities

The objectives will be achieved through the organisation of meetings (network meetings and workshops), establishment of a homepage on the internet and composing reports in interaction with CHAINET members.

Network meetings

An inaugural meeting has been held at Windsor (near London Heathrow) on May 26, 1998. The final network meeting will be held in Dresden, Germany, in the first week of October 1999.

Workshops

Workshops on the application of tools in each of the three cases will be held in Noordwijkerhout, the Netherlands, on October 29-30, 1998 and in Sevilla, Spain, on March 25-26, 1999.

Homepage and newsletter

A homepage has been established, which will provide information on the CHAINET activities:

<http://www.leidenuniv.nl/interface/cml/chainet.hp22.htm>

It will be updated once every two months. An electronic newsletter will be issued four times during the project period.

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